Workers School Plans Negro History Course

A course in the "History of the Negro People," to be given by Thomas Nabried, is listed in the curriculum of the Philadelphia Workers School and School of Social Science, 1215 Walnut street, for Tuesday evenings at 7.15 o'clock, beginning January 24 and ending March 25.

The course aims to make those who take it become familiar with and understand the history of the Negro people, their extensive contributions to the developments of our people, our culture, and our institutions; their problems and needs, what they can, must, and are willing to contribute to our common struggle for peace, democracy and progress."

ATLANTA SCHOOL IS PIONEER IN NEGRO HISTORY

Atlanta, (By James H. Boykin for ANP)—Under the direction of Prof. R. E. Cureton, the Booker T. Washington high school is a pioneer in the teaching of Negro history. Offering work in almost every conceivable phase of Negro history, the Atlanta school has a sufficient number of classes for a full-time instructor in the courses. The textbooks are furnished by the city.

The work of Prof. Cureton has been proclaimed by outstanding authorities and teachers all over the country. A unique feature of the work was the recent writing of his Negro History Work Book which brought to him many letters from teachers all over the country asking for teacher plans and methods.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson once said that Mr. Cureton has taught Negro history to more students than any teacher in the country. Negro history has been a required subject at Washington high school since 1927. This year the school will graduate 400 students, all of whom will have completed varied work in Negro history.

One of the very few high schools that requires of its seniors a course in American government, the local institution cooperates in every movement for the promotion of the interests of Negro people.

Mr. Cureton's success is backed by several years of teaching experience and travel all over the United States and in Austria, England, France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. Having traveled in 41 of the nation's 48 states and abroad, he has had an opportunity to observe Negroes everywhere and study their problems.

He is a graduate of Clark university and of Atlanta university with the degree of Master of Arts. At present he is preparing a pamphlet on Negro musicians, the theme for National Negro History week, which will be used in the program of Washington high school.

Negro History in the First Grade, Beaufort County Tr. School

My friends asked me (Madge Cleo Perry) how we come to have a Negro History course in the first grade.

Like others, I see the need of such a course in the Rural schools of our state in particular, because the children do not have access to selected race books and as a result of their ignorance of the achievements of our group, few race leaders, local or abroad are pointed out by our children as deals.

In a class sometime ago, it was found that two-thirds of the children had as their ideal some member of the opposite group. We do not want the children to be bias, we want to acquaint them with some facts of their group as well as of other groups, thereby giving them an opportunity to make the best of themselves.

We use our activity period for History. True stories are told the children in their own language of the success of different leaders, then each child is allowed to select the type of leader he likes. The children watch their ideal teacher from day to day and portrays the finding during the directed History period. Quite a few of the children have the Principal, J. S. Shanklin as their ideal some have the teachers, for certain qualities as: Cleanliness, good posture, being on time, etc.

Stories are also told of Mrs. Mary M. Bethune; making a step forward each day; Mrs. Marion B. Wilkinson: helping others; Booker T. Washington: using your hands and head; Robert S. Wilkinson: lifting humanity and President M. F. Whittaker: a friend to all. It is surprising to know that some of the children desire to be like these leaders whom they have not seen, and are thereby developing useful habits.

LORENZO HARRIS

artist and historian will conduct another of his Negro History Quiz programs at St. Mary Guild auditorium, Burlington, N. J., Friday evening, Mar. 31. The affair is sponsored by the teachers of the William R. Alien School.

Decide To Teach Negro History In Wilmington

WILMINGTON, Del.—The roles played by Negroes in American history will be taught in the Wilmington public schools. This was learned last week following the presentation of a resolution to City Council demanding that the Board of Education list the subject on the school curriculum.

Dr. John S. Hopkins, Councilman of the 6th Ward, presented the resolution, compiled by a committee of Negro leaders headed by John H. Bell, Jr., to the Council. It accepted the recommendation and referred to the Board of Education of which Dr. Foster M. Brown, a Negro, is a member.

S. C. Elementary Schools To Use Negro Text Books

COLUMBIA, S. C. — (ANP) — South Carolina state department of education has adopted Negro books for the first five grades in elementary schools. The books are written by noted Negro authors.

The list was approved after some study by a committee of selection of state adopted books upon suggestions of Miss Thomas, state supervisor of elementary education. She is a ranking member of the department of education of South Carolina.

The whole matter of placing Negro books in the public school list is due to the credit of a Negro school teacher in the Allendale school at Allendale, S. C. Little is known of this young woman, for she works in a small town. Her name is Hilda V. Grayson. While attending school, she was convinced of the importance of the story of the Negro race reaching the ears of the boys and girls of her race. She said, "They will see the possibility of rising in spite of all handicaps."

So intent was this young teacher in her beliefs that she was permitted to present her story to 5,000 members of the Palmetto State Teachers association. At its last session in March, she directed a history group which was a credit to her race. With her own means, she gathered and arranged a program which placed emphasis on Negro life. This included methods of presenting the material, the use of Negro music and liberature in schools.

Included in this program was an exhibit long to be rembered by the 1,100 persons visiting the group.

In the exhibit were over 50 Negro journals, more than 100 pictures of leaders, and 20 very good displays from various schools showing the progress made by Negroes in South Carolina and America.

Among the autographs collected during this meeting were those of officials from the state department of education.

This young woman has made several trips to popularize her belief in Negro literature. Among these was a trip to New York where she made personal contacts with book publishers and libraries, visiting the Shomberg collection, in an effort to collect material suitable to be presented for adoption by her state. She was a member of a committee that visited the department of education in an effor to have books adopted.

She has written over 100 articles to teen-age boys and girls, telling them about leading men and women of their race. She has in a scrapbook many complimentary letters from such persons as Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, Dr. C. C. Spaulding, Dr. J. J. Starks, the Rev. L. K. Williams, Dr. Carter G Woodson and others.

Negro Textbooks in the Public Schools

Perhaps the most most significant thing that has happened in educational circles this year is the adoption by the Oklahoma Text Book Commission of the Negro American Series of Readers, published by Harlow and Company. Mrs. Emma Akin, of Drumright, Oklahoma, a very liberal-minded white woman, is the author.

The Black Dispatch feels that this adoption is pregnant with meaning because it marks the beginning on the part of state government in recognizing the cultural contributions Negroes have made to American civilization and progress. It means that in the school room, during the plastic, impressionable years, youth, both black and white, will learn of the virtues and worthwhileness of black folk.

We recall during our childhood experiences, that one of the most depressive moments in life came when we studied geography forty years ago, and saw that picture depicting the Negro race, and the information printed there which said "The Negro race belongs to an inferior branch of the human family." Millions of white children who today occupy important positions in adult life studied that same geography and that is the reason why we feel that something fundamental and basic has been done in our academic processes when Mrs. Akin, a noble white woman, beginning with inspirational pictures, places in the school rooms of the nation text books presenting black boys and girls as normal-minded children and outstanding characters of ebony hue, who have helped to form the underpinning of our present day social order.

Someone may argue that a white woman cannot properly interpret black psychology and the life of darker people. But before me make that criticism let us make another which is more in point. Let us agree that Mrs. Akin has attempted something in a field where Negro intelligentsia has fail to function. Most certainly some Negro classroom instructor or intellectual should have done a better job in this field than a woman of another race, but we must remember that after all this noble white woman has attempted to do that which no one of the thirteen million Negroes in America has even thought of doing.

These texts in actuality pave the way for future Negro texts written by Negro authors. There is a possibility that a Negro text by a Negro author would not have been acceptable to the Oklahoma Text Book Commission, but Mrs. Akin paves the way down the highway of indifference and furnishes the vision to Negro intellectuals. This adoption is the entering wedge pregnant with untold possibilities.

A great deal, however, depends upon the attitude the Negro instructors of the state assume towards these texts. If the text book commission finds that Negroes themselves are not interested in Negro readers' portrayal of black life and achievement, Negro texts are on their way out more speedily than they arrived. Herein lies the grave danger.

Every Negro educator in the state should make application to the county superintendent of his county for these books. If the school is in an independent district the school board should be advised of the desirability of placing them in the school room. In addition, Negro teachers should call the attention of the white instructors to their value in developing better interracial understanding.

It might be interesting to know that in Kansas a number of white schools have already purchased these books, and in every instance they have proven of engrossing interest to white students of all ages.

Mrs. Akin has done a fine job in preparing these books. This writer personally knows that she has traveled all over the southland, and given years of intensive study to the Negro race in Oklahoma, preparatory to performing her task. This lone, daring white woman possibly knows more about Negro history, past and present, than the majority of Negro college graduates in this state.

As we said a moment ago, the danger lies in the lack of vision which may develop among black folk as to the value of these texts. The Black Dispatch is hoping that with the opening of school the text book commission will in no uncertain terms learn there is an unquenchable thirst among Negroes for the teaching of Negro history in the separate schools.